MODESTY BLAISE

by Peter O'Donnell and Jim Holdaway

THE JERICHO CAPER 1350-1461

MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
THE JERICHO CAPER
THE LITTLE VILLAGE OF LUQUERRES LIES ON THE PACIFIC COAST OF CENTRAL AMERICA . . .

MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
HALLO, PADRE — IS TORRES COMING DOWN TO THE BEACH?
NO... HE WAS BUSY WITH HIS LATEST PIECE OF WORK WHEN I CALLED — IT WILL BE VERY BEAUTIFUL, I THINK

MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
YOU HAVE BECOME ONE OF US IN THE WEEKS THAT YOU HAVE BEEN HERE, MODESTY... BUT WHAT MADE YOU COME TO LUQUERRES?
JUST CHANCE... I WAS IDLING IN THE STATES AND GREW TIRED OF IT...

MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
YOU HAVE MORE THAN BEFRIENDED TORRES... I HOPE IT WAS NOT FROM PITY
HE'D LAUGH IF HE HEARD YOU SAY THAT

TORRES ALWAYS LAUGHS... YOU KNOW, HE WAS A BRILLIANT YOUNG PAINTER — BUT HE FOUGHT IN THE REVOLUTION TEN YEARS AGO, AND A HEAD-WOUND TOOK AWAY HIS SIGHT... SO HE SETTLED HERE, AWAY FROM THE WORLD...

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

I'VE BROUGHT FATHER RAMON FOR LUNCH, TORRES
GOOD! ALWAYS GLAD TO SEE YOU, PADRE
I WOULD BE GLAD TO SEE YOU AT MY OWN PLACE OF BUSINESS SOMETIMES, TORRES
I'LL THINK ABOUT IT
HOLD STILL, MODESTY— I WANT TO CHECK THE LINE OF YOUR SHOULDER AND NECK AGAIN
1354

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

TORRES, I'VE GOT TO GET SOME LUNCH—
YES, IN A MINUTE— HAVE I GOT THE SHOULDER RIGHT, PADRE?
IT FEELS RIGHT, BUT I'VE NO WAY OF TELLING IF IT LOOKS RIGHT
I'M NOT A STUDENT OF THE FEMALE SHOULDER, TORRES. BUT I THINK YOU CAN BE PLEASED WITH YOUR WORK SO FAR
1355

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

CAN I HELP, TORRES?
YOU'LL ARGUE THAT LIFE IS A SERIOUS MATTER, AND I'LL PROVE THAT IT'S ALL JUST A BIG CRAZY JOKE— YES?
IS THE BEAUTY YOU CREATE A JOKE, TORRES?
NO THANKS, I COULD DO THIS BLINDFOLD! WE'LL HAVE ONE OF OUR DING-DONG BATTLES, EH PADRE?...
BUT OF COURSE! LOOK AT THIS — WHEN I CAN FIND IT — THE CLAY'S NO GOOD AND IT CRACKS IN A YEAR... I'M AN IDIOT TO DO IT!
1356

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

MORNING IN LUQUERRES...
WHAT ARE WE DOING TODAY, MODESTY?
WOULD YOU LIKE TO GO OUT WITH THE FISHING BOATS?
I'D RATHER WORK ON THE MODEL FOR A BIT... I'M NOT SURE HOW LONG I'LL HAVE TO FINISH IT
HOW LONG?
YOU'RE NOT GOING TO STAY IN LUQUERRES FOR EVER, MY SWEET. I'VE ALWAYS KNOWN THAT— AND I'VE GOT TO GET YOUR HEAD RIGHT
1357

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

TROUBLED ABOUT GOING AWAY AND LEAVING ME?
I'M JUST HOPING YOU WON'T MISS ME TOO MUCH
I MISS MY SIGHT, BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN I WISH I'D NEVER HAD IT
YOU'VE GOT A SCAR ON YOUR LEG JUST ABOUT HERE— HOW DID YOU COME BY THAT?
AN OLD BULLET WOUND
1358

MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL

THE SIGHTLESS TORRES BEGINS TO MODEL THE HEAD AND NECK

I FOUND MORE THAN ONE SCAR ON YOU — DON'T TELL ME THEY'RE **ALL** BULLET WOUNDS

NO... ONE WAS A KNIFE

YOU CARRY A GUN IN YOUR RUCKSACK AND A TRANSMITTER IN THE JEEP... THERE'S A LOT I DON'T KNOW ABOUT YOU, MODESTY...

TELL ME

A BOAT MOVES DOWN THE RIVER THAT DEBOUCHES SOUTH OF LUQUERRES

1359

MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL

THE MAIN STREET OF LUQUERRES

CARLOS! THREE MEN FROM CALIA ARE HERE!

IT IS TWENTY YEARS SINCE THE DESPERADOS MADE TROUBLE HERE, MARIA — THEIR PRESIDENT SENDS THEM DOWN ONLY TO TRADE

BUT... THIS TIME IT IS **DIFFERENT**, I THINK!

1360

MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL

YOU GET READY THREE CRATES OF CANNED FOOD, TOOLS FOR MINING, PLENTY CLOTHES, GAS FOR BOAT

THE STEAMER COMES ONLY ONCE IN THREE MONTHS, SENORES — I CAN SELL YOU SOME FOOD AND CLOTHES, BUT TOOLS I MUST ORDER —

YOU DON'T SELL US — YOU **GIVE!**

1361

MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL

THE THREE DESPERADOS TAKE THEIR PICK FROM THE GENERAL STORE

GET SOME MEN TO CARRY THE STUFF TO OUR BOAT

SENOR... I BEG YOU NOT TO DO THIS THING — YOUR LEADER, PRESIDENT LAFAYETTE, WILL LAY TERRIBLE PUNISHMENT UPON YOU!

LAFAYETTE IS DEAD... **SABO DE MAR** IS THE BOSS IN CALIA NOW

1362

MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL

NOW WE PICK THREE NICE GIRLS TO TAKE BACK TO CALIA WITH US

HEY, KOVEK! THIS ONE FOR YOU? YOU LIKE THEM WITH PLENTY MEAT!

MY ROSA! **NO!**

YES...

ANYBODY ELSE LIKE TO ARGUE?

1363

MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
THAT WAS A SHOT...
SOUNDED LIKE ONE, BUT IT CAN'T HAVE BEEN— YOU'VE GOT THE ONLY GUN IN LUQUERRES! COME BACK AND HOLD THAT POSE
TORRES! TELL MODESTY TO HIDE! THE DESPERADOS ARE HERE— THEY HAVE ROBBED THE STORE AND THEY ARE TAKING WOMEN! WHEN ROSA'S FATHER TRIED TO STOP THEM THEY KILLED HIM!
HOW MANY MEN AND WHAT KIND OF GUNS, LUCIA?
THREE MEN... I—I DON'T KNOW ABOUT GUNS, MODESTY
1364
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
BUT IT'S CRAZY, LUCIA— LAFAYETTE NEVER LETS THE DESPERADOS MAKE TROUBLE HERE!
PRESIDENT LAFAYETTE IS DEAD...
SABO DE MAR IS THE HEAD MAN OF CALIA NOW!
MODESTY?
CAN I HEAR YOU LOADING THAT DAMN GUN?
YES... THERE'S A TIME FOR EVERYTHING, TORRES — AND THIS IS A TIME FOR LOADING A GUN
1365
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
IF THERE ARE THREE KILLERS LOOSE IN LUQUERRES, SOMEBODY HAS TO STOP THEM
YOU?
ME, TORRES... IT'S MY KIND OF BUSINESS — KEEP LUCIA HERE WITH YOU
YOUR VOICE HAS CHANGED ... HAS YOUR FACE CHANGED TOO? I WISH I COULD SEE IT...
FOR A MOMENT TORRES' HAND TOUCHES MODESTY'S CHEEK— THEN A SHORT, FIERCE UPPERCUT TAKES HER UNDER THE JAW
1366
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
THE BLIND MAN CARRIES MODESTY THROUGH TO THE BEDROOM...
IS THERE ANYTHING ON THE BED, LUCIA?
JUST— JUST A RUCKSACK ... I WILL MOVE IT
TEAR SOME STRIPS FROM A SHEET— I'M GOING TO TIE HER DOWN
WOULD THEY? I'VE AN IDEA THINGS MIGHT HAVE WORKED OUT THE OTHER WAY ROUND
YOU WERE RIGHT TO STOP HER GOING TO FIGHT THE DESPERADOS— THEY WOULD HAVE KILLED HER, TORRES!
1367
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
MODESTY COMES TO HER SENSES, AND STARES UP AT TORRES...
SHE IS AWAKE, TORRES
AFRAID I TOOK AN UNFAIR ADVANTAGE OF YOU, MODESTY— YOU'D HARDLY EXPECT A BLIND MAN TO LAY YOU OUT
TORRES, LET ME GO... LET ME TAKE CARE OF THOSE KILLERS—I SWEAR I CAN HANDLE THEM
I BELIEVE YOU, SWEETHEART... BUT I'M KEEPING YOU HERE TILL THEY'VE GONE
GONE? TAKING YOUNG GIRLS FROM THE VILLAGE? DAMN YOU, TORRES—
I'M SORRY ABOUT THE GIRLS... BUT JUST RELAX, AND LISTEN TO A STORY...
1368

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

THE STORY BEGINS NEARLY FORTY YEARS AGO, WHEN A HANDFUL OF CONVICTS ESCAPED FROM DEVIL'S ISLAND... AND SOMEHOW GOT TO THE PACIFIC COAST
THEY KNEW IF THEY WERE PICKED UP ANYWHERE THEY'D BE SENT BACK, SO THEY HEADED INLAND...
...A LONG WAY INLAND, TO UNEXPLORED TERRITORY THAT NOBODY CARED ABOUT ...THEY SETTLED THERE, AND THEY CALLED IT CALIA
1369

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

TORRES CONTINUES HIS STORY...
OVER THE YEARS, OTHER RUNAWAYS JOINED THE ESCAPED CONVICTS IN CALIA... SO DID BANDITS, ADVENTURERS, SOLDIERS OF FORTUNE — AND THEIR WOMEN...
THEY MINED DIAMONDS, PANNED GOLD, RAISED SHEEP, AND ELECTED A PRESIDENT... THE POPULATION GREW TO THOUSANDS, SPREAD OVER AN AREA BIGGER THAN ENGLAND
SO THE NEIGHBOURING STATES DECIDED TO RECOGNISE THIS REPUBLIC OF DESPERADOS — IT WAS A LOT EASIER THAN STARTING A WAR
1370

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

TORRES TELLS OF THE REPUBLIC OF DESPERADOS...
WAY BACK, A BUNCH OF THEM CAME DOWN-RIVER AND RAN WILD HERE IN LUQUERRES — KILLED HALF THE MEN, CARRIED OFF HALF THE WOMEN
YES... MY FATHER REMEMBERS THAT DAY!
WHEN LAFAYETTE BECAME PRESIDENT HE STOPPED ALL THAT— THEY'VE MADE NO TROUBLE FOR YEARS, UNTIL NOW...
UNTIL NOW — AND YOU STOPPED ME STOPPING THEM!
SABO DE MAR RUNS CALIA NOW... IF YOU KILLED THOSE THREE MEN HE'D COME DOWN IN STRENGTH AND WIPE THIS VILLAGE OFF THE MAP!
1371

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

LUCIA! LUCIA, YOU ARE HERE?
YES, FATHER — HAVE THE DESPERADOS GONE?
GONE, YES... TAKING THREE GIRLS AND A BOAT-LOAD OF STORES
THANK GOD FATHER RAMON WAS OUT WITH THE FISHERMEN — HE WOULD HAVE TRIED TO STOP THEM, AND BEEN KILLED FOR IT!
ALL CLEAR... I'M NOT APOLOGISING, MODESTY, YOU'LL JUST HAVE TO HATE ME
WE ALL PLAY THINGS THE WAY WE SEE THEM... I STILL THINK YOU'RE WRONG, TORRES, BUT I DON'T HATE YOU
1372

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

TWO HOURS AFTER THE DESPERADOS HAVE LEFT, FATHER RAMON RETURNS WITH THE FISHING BOATS
JOSE KILLED? THREE GIRLS CARRIED OFF? AND I... I WAS NOT HERE WITH MY FLOCK
THE DESPERADOS WILL COME AGAIN, PADRE! WHAT ARE WE TO DO?
I MUST THINK, TAKE COUNSEL... TORRES, MODESTY, WILL YOU COME TO MY PRESBYTERY IN ONE HOUR? I HAVE FIRST TO COMFORT JOSE'S WIFE...
1373

MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
THE GOVERNMENT WILL NOT PROTECT US OR TRY TO RESCUE THE GIRLS. IT WOULD BE TOO COSTLY... SO WHAT SHOULD WE DO?
TORRES?
NOTHING, PADRE... JUST TRY TO GO ON LIVING THROUGH WHATEVER HAPPENS
YOU KNOW MY VIEWS— NOTHING IS WORTH FIGHTING FOR, ESPECIALLY WHEN THE FIGHT IS HOPELESS
THIS ONE NEEDN'T BE HOPELESS
1374
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
AND WHAT IS YOUR ADVICE, MODESTY?
YOU CAN TAKE THE VIEW THAT IT'S ALWAYS WRONG TO FIGHT... THAT PASSIVE ACCEPTANCE WINS IN THE END
MAYBE IT DOES— BUT A LOT OF PEOPLE ARE GOING TO BE ROBBED, BRUTALISED, AND EVEN KILLED WHILE YOU WAIT PERHAPS TEN OR FIFTEEN YEARS FOR THINGS TO COME RIGHT
I DON'T KNOW, TORRES... I JUST KNOW THAT THE TIME TO HIT BACK AT TERRORISM IS RIGHT AT THE START— LATER IS ALWAYS TOO LATE
HOW MANY LIVES WILL IT COST IF WE FIGHT? OR TRY TO?
1375
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
SO WHAT WOULD YOU DO, MODESTY?
GO AFTER THOSE KILLERS NOW, SIGN THEM OFF, AND BRING BACK THE GIRLS— THEN ORGANISE THE VILLAGE AGAINST AN ATTACK IN STRENGTH
GIVE ME FOUR DAYS AND I'LL BRING IN ALL THE FIRE-POWER WE NEED— I KNOW THIS BUSINESS BACKWARDS
WITH NO WEAPONS?
ALL RIGHT— BUT YOU CAN'T MAKE WARRIORS OUT OF FRIGHTENED FISHERMEN, SWEETHEART
WHEN MEN FIGHT FOR THEIR HOMES AND THEIR WOMEN THEY LEARN FAST, TORRES, BELIEVE ME
1376
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
TOMORROW I WILL START THE JOURNEY UP-RIVER TO CALIA... AND THERE I WILL SPEAK WITH SABO DE MAR HIMSELF
WELL... MODESTY SAYS FIGHT, I SAY KNUCKLE UNDER— WHAT ABOUT YOU, PADRE?
IT IS MY SIMPLE DUTY TO DEMAND THE RETURN OF THE STOLEN GIRLS, AND TO DEMAND HIS PROMISE THAT THE DESPERADOS SHALL BRING NO FURTHER VIOLENCE TO LUQUERRES
PADRE... IT WILL BE A MIRACLE IF HE DOESN'T KILL YOU ON THE SPOT
MY DEAR TORRES! ARE YOU ASKING ME TO DOUBT THAT MIRACLES CAN HAPPEN?
1377
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
TWO DAYS UP-RIVER, THREE DAYS TREK BEYOND— YOU'LL NEVER MAKE IT, PADRE, LET ALONE BE ABLE TO TALK WITH SABO DE MAR
OLD VINES ARE HARDY, TORRES
I'LL BE GOING ALONG WITH YOU, FATHER RAMON— NO, PLEASE DON'T ARGUE, THERE'S NO WAY YOU CAN STOP ME
AND I'LL SEE YOU DON'T STOP ME THIS TIME, TORRES
TILL TOMORROW THEN— WILL YOU EXCUSE ME NOW? I HAVE TO TALK TO A MAN IN ENGLAND
1378

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

I AM OLD, TORRES, AND TO RISK MY OWN LIFE MEANS LITTLE TO ME— BUT TO RISK THE LIFE OF THAT YOUNG WOMAN...
I THINK YOU'LL FIND SHE'S GOOD AT STAYING ALIVE...
...I'VE COUNTED FOUR BULLET WOUNDS AND ONE KNIFE WOUND ON HER BODY—
OH— SORRY, PADRE
WHAT DID SHE MEAN BY SAYING SHE HAD TO SPEAK TO A MAN IN ENGLAND?
SHE HAD A MOBILE AMATEUR RADIO IN HER LAND-ROVER— IT'S SET UP IN THE HOUSE NOW, AND SHE TALKS TO A MAN CALLED WILLIE GARVIN SEVERAL TIMES A WEEK
1379

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

MODESTY SITS BY THE KW 2000A TRANSCEIVER, REMOVED FROM HER LAND-ROVER
HALLO, TORRES... DON'T START AN ARGUMENT, I'LL BE ON THE AIR IN A FEW MINUTES
YOU KNOW... I'M CURIOUS ABOUT THIS FRIEND OF YOURS, WILLIE GARVIN
THAT'S BEEN SAID TO ME BEFORE— IT SEEMS TO BE A STANDARD REACTION
ELEVEN O'CLOCK IN LONDON... AND WILLIE PICKS UP SIR GERALD TARRANT FOR A WEEKEND'S FISHING AT THE TREADMILL
SORRY I COULDN'T MAKE IT EARLIER, WILLIE
THAT'S ALL RIGHT— I EXPLAINED TO THE FISH
1380

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

MODESTY STILL IN THE STATES?
CENTRAL AMERICA NOW— SHE'S GONE NATIVE IN SOME PINT-SIZED VILLAGE ON THE PACIFIC COAST...
...SHE LIKES A BIT OF THE SIMPLE LIFE NOW AN' THEN— WE MIGHT 'AVE A WORD WITH 'ER IN A FEW MINUTES
I MUST BE TIRED— DON'T QUITE FOLLOW YOU, WILLIE
WE'RE BOTH MOBILE LICENSED RADIO AMATEURS, SIR G.
BUT DAMMIT, YOU CAN'T EXPECT TO TALK TO HER IN CENTRAL AMERICA WHILE YOU'RE DRIVING UP VICTORIA STREET!
1381

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

SEE THAT? KW 2000A TRANSCEIVER— POWER FROM THE CAR BATTERY THROUGH TRANSISTORISED CIRCUITS— I'VE DRIVEN THROUGH LONDON TALKING TO BLOKES IN NEW ZEALAND, CALIFORNIA, HONG KONG ... ALL OVER
AS THE CAR HALTS AT TRAFFIC LIGHTS...
VOX-OPERATED TRANSMISSION AND A CLIP-ON MIKE, SO YOU CAN KEEP BOTH 'ANDS ON THE WHEEL WHILE YOU CHAT
I'VE GOT A DAILY SKED WITH MODESTY ON THE 20-METRE BAND— SPOT FREQUENCY FOURTEEN ONE-O-THREE MEGS
I DON'T DOUBT MY TECHNICAL CHAPS WOULD UNDERSTAND— BUT IT'S PURE GIBBERISH TO ME!
1382

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

NOT WITHOUT A LICENCE— THE AMATEUR BANDS ARE MONITORED AND THE RULES ARE TOUGH— NO RELIGION, POLITICS, THIRD-PARTY MESSAGES...
COULD I SPEAK TO MODESTY ON THIS MAGIC BOX?
...OR SEX!
HOW SAD... I'D HOPED TO READ A CHAPTER FROM "FANNY HILL"
FIVE THOUSAND MILES AWAY
G3QRM, G3QRM, HERE IS G3QRO STROKE CZ1 CALLING ON SKED...
1383

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

MODESTY'S VOICE COMES CLEARLY FROM THE OTHER SIDE OF THE WORLD, WITH ONLY A FAINT CRACKLE OF STATIC

...HERE IS G3QRO STROKE CZ1 CALLING ON SKED — HOW COPY?

G3QRO STROKE CZ1, HERE IS G3QRM MOBILE REPLYING — YOU'RE COMING IN FINE — MY QTH IS THE BAYSWATER ROAD...

...AND I'VE GOT SIR GERALD RIGHT BESIDE ME — HOW'S THINGS IN LUQUERRES, PRINCESS?

NOT GOOD... WE HAVE TROUBLE WITH THE NEIGHBOURS, WILLIE LOVE

1384

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

IS IT BAD TROUBLE, PRINCESS?

LETHAL...

EVER HEARD OF CALIA, WILLIE? REPUBLIC OF DESPERADOS?

ONCE KNEW A BLOKE WHO'D SPENT TWO YEARS THERE... IT'S ONLY ABOUT FIVE DAYS TRAVEL INLAND FROM YOU, ISN'T IT—?

BLIMEY! ARE ***THEY*** THE NEIGHBOURS YOU'RE GETTING TROUBLE FROM?

1385

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

FROM LUQUERRES, MODESTY GIVES A QUICK RUNDOWN ON THE SITUATION TO WILLIE GARVIN, IN LONDON

... SO FATHER RAMON IS GOING UP-RIVER TO TALK TO THE NEW BOSS-MAN IN CALIA — SABO DE MAR

HE'D BE SAFER TRYING TO WRESTLE CROCODILES, SO I'M GOING ALONG WITH HIM — I HAVE TO, WILLIE

TELL HER NOT TO BE A FOOL!

WISH I WAS THERE, PRINCESS — PLAY IT CAREFUL. THEY'RE A TOUGH LOT

1386

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

THAT'S ALL — I JUST WANTED TO LET YOU KNOW I WON'T BE ON SKED FOR QUITE A WHILE

SURE, PRINCESS... GOOD LUCK

DON'T SOUND SO WORRIED, I'LL BE CAREFUL, WILLIE ...THIS IS G3QRO STROKE CZ1 OFF AND CLEAR — WITH EIGHTY-EIGHT

AS WILLIE SWITCHES OFF THE MOBILE RADIO...

WHAT'S EIGHTY-EIGHT?

STANDARD CODE FOR 'LOVE AN' KISSES'!..

WE'LL 'AVE TO SKIP THE FISHING TRIP, SIR G... I GOT A FLIGHT TO BOOK

1387

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

DAWN... AND FATHER RAMON PREPARES TO START THE FIRST STAGE OF THE JOURNEY TO CALIA...

MODESTY, FOR THE LAST TIME I BEG YOU TO LET ME GO ***ALONE***

I'M GLAD THAT'S THE LAST TIME

THEN AT LEAST LEAVE YOUR GUN, CHILD — THIS IS A MISSION OF PEACE

I HOPE SO, PADRE... AND I WON'T START ANY TROUBLE — BUT I'LL KEEP THE GUN, JUST IN CASE THINGS DON'T WORK OUT YOUR WAY

ONE MORE PASSENGER COMING ABOARD

TORRES!

1388

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

YOU CAN'T COME ON THIS TRIP, TORRES! DON'T BE A FOOL —
WHY NOT? LIKE YOU AND FATHER RAMON, I HAVE A PERFECT RIGHT TO BE AS BIG A FOOL AS I PLEASE...
...AFTER ALL, WE ONLY HAVE TO TACKLE A FEW THOUSAND OF THE WORLD'S WORST DESPERADOES
A WOMAN, A PRIEST, AND A BLIND MAN — HOW CAN WE LOSE? LET'S GET GOING, MY SWEET...
1389

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

AFTER THREE DAYS' SLOW JOURNEY THE RIVER IS NO LONGER NAVIGABLE
THIS SEEMS TO BE THE STAGING POINT FOR CALIA — WE'LL BE ON FOOT FOR THE REST OF THE WAY
YOU'LL HAVE TO LEAD ME... A SHORT PIECE OF ROPE WILL DO FINE
I WISH WILLIE GARVIN WAS HERE... HE CAN READ JUNGLE SIGNS LIKE A BOOK
AH... YOU'RE HOPING TO CATCH UP WITH THE THUGS WHO TOOK OUR GIRLS, AREN'T YOU?
BUT THEN WHAT? YOU TOLD FATHER RAMON YOU DIDN'T BRING YOUR LITTLE GUN TO START TROUBLE!
SO I'D HAVE TO APOLOGISE TO HIM — AFTERWARDS
1390

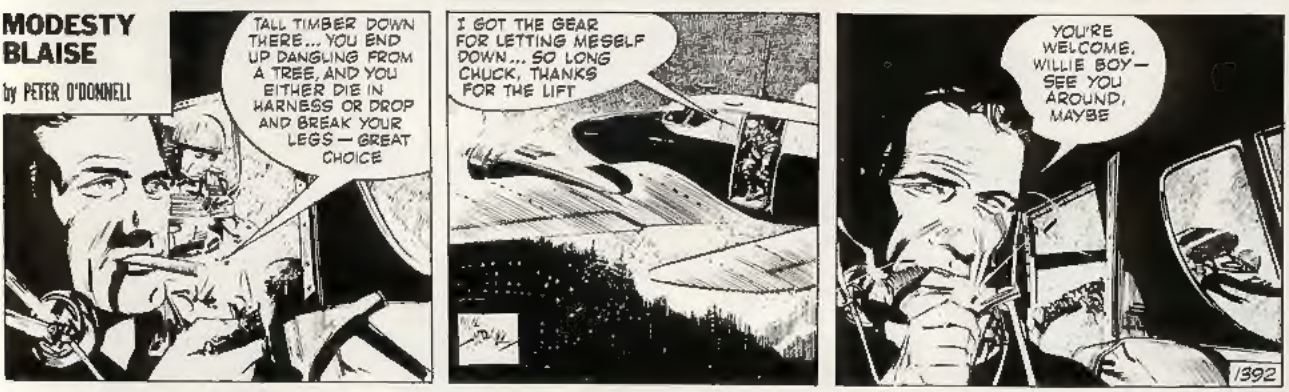
MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

NOT GREAT — BUT I WAS TAUGHT BY AN EXPERT
YOU HAVE GREAT SKILL IN THE WAYS OF JUNGLE LIVING, MODESTY
NOW... IF THIS MAP IS RIGHT WE STRIKE THE LICHUA PASS TOMORROW
WE'D BETTER — IT'S THE ONLY WAY THROUGH AN EIGHTY-MILE BARRIER OF MOUNTAIN
IN A SMALL SURVEY AIRCRAFT...
WELL, YOU CAN EITHER DROP ON THE SIDE OF THE MOUNTAIN OR PLUMB ON TOP OF THE TREES — YOU NAME IT, WILLIE BOY
MAKE IT THE TREES, CHUCK ... I'M A NATURE-LOVER
1391

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL


TALL TIMBER DOWN THERE... YOU END UP DANGLING FROM A TREE, AND YOU EITHER DIE IN HARNESS OR DROP AND BREAK YOUR LEGS — GREAT CHOICE
I GOT THE GEAR FOR LETTING MESELF DOWN... SO LONG CHUCK, THANKS FOR THE LIFT
YOU'RE WELCOME, WILLIE BOY — SEE YOU AROUND, MAYBE
1392

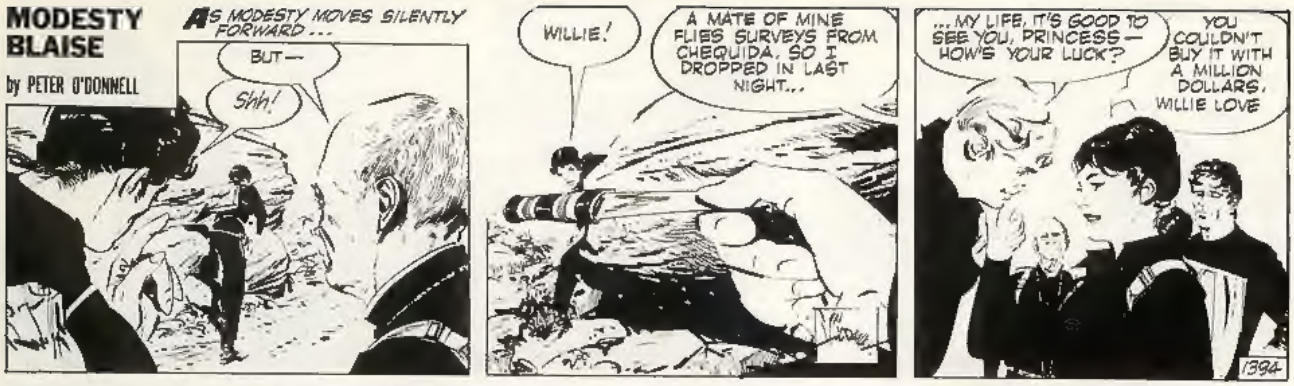
MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

MODESTY AND HER COMPANIONS EMERGE FROM THE JUNGLE AND REACH THE LICHUA PASS
DO YOU KNOW IF THE DESPERADOS KEEP GUARD HERE, TORRES?
I DOUBT IT, THERE'S NO NEED...
But there's somebody close by — ahead and to the right
Sure?
I have blind man's hearing, Sweetheart
1393

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL


AS MODESTY MOVES SILENTLY FORWARD...
BUT—
Shh!
WILLIE!
A MATE OF MINE FLIES SURVEYS FROM CHEQUIDA. SO I DROPPED IN LAST NIGHT...
...MY LIFE, IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU, PRINCESS— HOW'S YOUR LUCK?
YOU COULDN'T BUY IT WITH A MILLION DOLLARS, WILLIE LOVE
1394

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

AFTER INTRODUCTIONS...
FATHER RAMON IS HOPING TO PERSUADE SABO DE MAR PEACEFULLY
I BROUGHT A BIT OF FIRE-POWER ALONG—
AH! THEN YOU'LL FIND I'M A MAN AFTER YOUR OWN 'EART, PADRE— LIKE IT SAYS IN PSALM 120, "I LABOUR FOR PEACE..."
IT GOES ON, MR. GARVIN, "BUT... THEY MAKE THEM READY TO BATTLE." AS YOU ARE DOING!
ER... WELL, THAT'S JUST IN CASE I FIND I'M LABOURING IN VAIN
1395

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

THE LITTLE PARTY MOVES THROUGH THE PASS AND INTO WOODED COUNTRY BEYOND...
YOU'RE A BIT OF A NUT COMING ON THIS JAUNT, TORRES, AREN'T YOU?
WOULD I STAND ANY BETTER CHANCE IF I HAD MY SIGHT?
I THINK WE'RE ALL CRAZY, WILLIE— BUT I HAVEN'T TOO MUCH TO LOSE, AND I LIKE BEING WITH MODESTY
FROM NOT FAR AWAY THERE COMES THE SUDDEN RATTLE OF GUNFIRE
'ALLO! SMALL-ARMS...
THAT WAY, MODESTY— ABOUT A QUARTER OF A MILE
1396

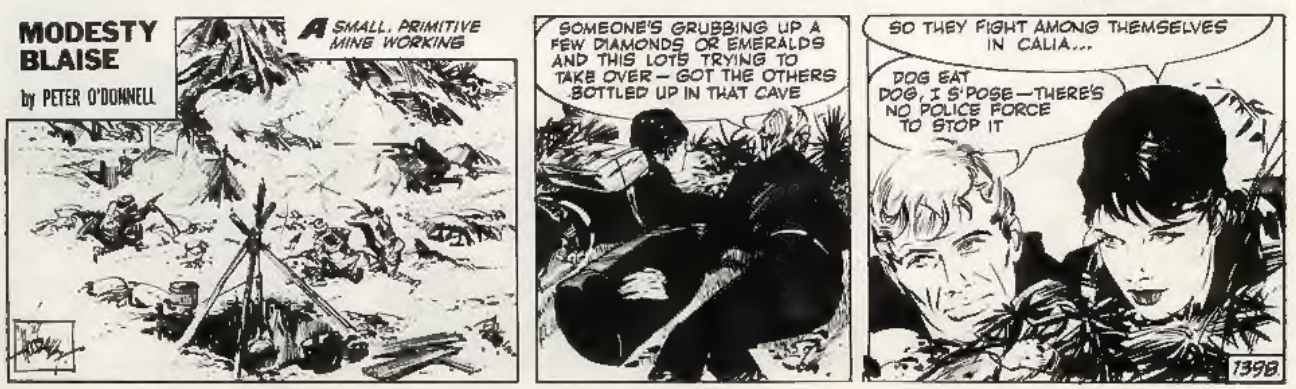
MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

AS THE SOUND OF SHOOTING CONTINUES...
I DOUBT IF GUNPLAY IS ALL THAT UNUSUAL IN CALIA
WE INTERESTED, PRINCESS?
I'D LIKE TO KNOW WHO'S FIGHTING WHO, AND WHY— STAY HERE WITH TORRES, PLEASE, FATHER RAMON
I MAY BE NEEDED
LATER, PERHAPS, NOT YET— SORRY PADRE, BUT PEACE-MAKING IN THIS TERRITORY HAS NO FUTURE AT ALL
1397

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL


A SMALL, PRIMITIVE MINE WORKING
SOMEONE'S GRUBBING UP A FEW DIAMONDS OR EMERALDS AND THIS LOT'S TRYING TO TAKE OVER— GOT THE OTHERS BOTTLED UP IN THAT CAVE
SO THEY FIGHT AMONG THEMSELVES IN CALIA...
DOG EAT DOG, I S'POSE— THERE'S NO POLICE FORCE TO STOP IT
1398

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

WE TAKING S DEG, PRINCESS?
IT'S A CHANCE TO WIN A FEW FRIENDS HERE MAYBE .. BUT WHICH SIDE?
GIVE UP, FINN! YOU'RE DEAD!
GO TA HELL YA CRAWLIN' STREAK O' PIG-SWILL!
FINN? FROM THE OLD NETWORK?
FINN'S VOICE, FINN'S ELEGANT PHRASING — WELL THAT SETTLES WHOSE S DE WE'RE ON WILL B
399
THEY GOT US FINN
ARR SHUT UP AND KEEP F GHT N DUTCHY
THREE MEN ARE TRAPPED IN THE CAVE — ONE A GIANT IRISHMAN...
HEY F NN' I SEND YOU NICE PRESENT NOW!
AS THE ARM SWINGS BACK A THROWN KNIFE STRIKES HOME...
UHH!
1400
AS THE STICK OF BURNING DYNAMITE FALLS FROM THE DEAD MAN'S HAND...
TWO FOR THE PRICE OF ONE
MODESTY MOVES IN ON THE FAR SIDE OF THE HOLLOW
DROP THE GUN — DON'T TRY ANYTHING, JUST DROP T—
THE MAN TRIES...
1401
IN THE CAVE
COME ON BOYS, WILL YA? SOMEONE'S TAK NG A HAND FOR US OUT THERE
HOLY ST. PATRICK! IT — IT'S MODESTY BLAISE!
MAM'SELLE I'M BEREFT O' SPEECH ENT RELY! ME TONGUE'S PARALYSED! I'M BEAT FOR WORDS! I'M — I'M NART CULATE JUST
SAME OLD FINN
402
IN TROUBLE AS USUAL, FINN?
I WAS! ARR, BUT YOU HAPPENED ALONG NICELY MAM'SELLE... AND YOU'RE LOOKIN' FINE, FINE!
AND THERE'S THE BOYO, EH? I THOUGHT HE'D NOT BE FAR
TOP O' THE MORNING, WILLIE!
YOU WANT I GO HELP, FINN?
DON'T BE A SILLY WEE MAN NOW, MIG — THAT'S WILLIE GARVIN
1403

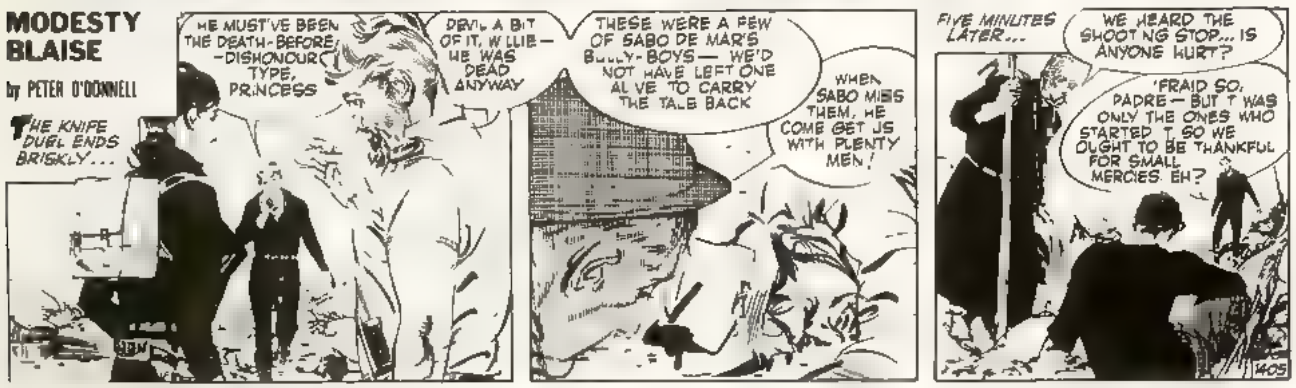
MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

I'D LIKE TO INTRODUCE ME FRENDS, DUTCHY AN' MAG
AN' THIS IS MODESTY BLAISE, ME BOYS— YOU CALL HER MAM'SELLE YOU TALK RESPECTFUL, AND YOU'RE NEVER SO IGNORANT AS TO SIT WHILE SHE'S STANDING
WILL YA STOP FOOLIN' AND COME SAY HALLO, WILLIE?
I'M TRYING TO LET YOU STAY ALIVE MATEY— JUST DROP THE KNIFE!
1404

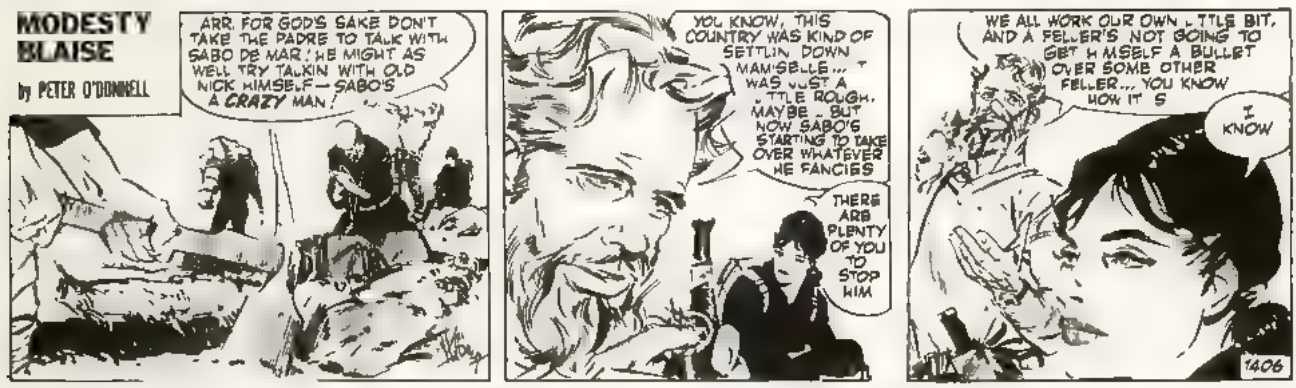
MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL


THE KNIFE DUEL ENDS BRISKLY...
HE MUST'VE BEEN THE DEATH-BEFORE-DISHONOUR TYPE, PRINCESS
DEVIL A BIT OF IT, WILLIE— HE WAS DEAD ANYWAY
THESE WERE A FEW OF SABO DE MAR'S BULLY-BOYS— WE'D NOT HAVE LEFT ONE ALIVE TO CARRY THE TALE BACK
WHEN SABO MISS THEM, HE COME GET US WITH PLENTY MEN!
FIVE MINUTES LATER...
WE HEARD THE SHOOTING STOP... IS ANYONE HURT?
'FRAID SO, PADRE— BUT IT WAS ONLY THE ONES WHO STARTED IT SO WE OUGHT TO BE THANKFUL FOR SMALL MERCIES EH?
1405

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL


ARR, FOR GOD'S SAKE DON'T TAKE THE PADRE TO TALK WITH SABO DE MAR! HE MIGHT AS WELL TRY TALKIN WITH OLD NICK HIMSELF— SABO'S A CRAZY MAN!
YOU KNOW, THIS COUNTRY WAS KIND OF SETTLIN DOWN MAM'SELLE... IT WAS JUST A LITTLE ROUGH, MAYBE... BUT NOW SABO'S STARTING TO TAKE OVER WHATEVER HE FANCIES
THERE ARE PLENTY OF YOU TO STOP HIM
WE ALL WORK OUR OWN LITTLE BIT, AND A FELLER'S NOT GOING TO GET HIMSELF A BULLET OVER SOME OTHER FELLER... YOU KNOW HOW IT IS
I KNOW
1406

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

IF WE JUST WALK IN ON SABO DE MAR AND ASK FOR THE THREE GIRLS HIS MEN TOOK AWAY, WE'RE MUTTON PADRE— THAT'S FROM FINN, AND HE KNOWS
I MUST STILL TRY, CHAD... BUT YOU MUST TURN BACK, AND TAKE TORRES WITH YOU
EXASPERATING ISN'T HE?
ANY CHANCE OF WHIPPING UP A REVOLT AGAINST SABO?
NEVER A GODDAM HOPE WILLIE— EXCEPT IN A YEAR'S TIME MAYBE, WHEN HE'S RODDEN EVERYONE HARD ENOUGH TO MAKE 'EM GET TOGETHER
1407

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

I HOPE MODESTY WILL TAKE YOU HOME TO LUQUERRES NOW, TORRES
SHE WON'T PADRE... SHE WANTS TO GET THOSE GIRLS BACK, AND SHE KNOWS YOUR WAY WON'T WORK
LOOKS LIKE WE'LL HAVE TO DO A QUICK IN AND OUT JOB, PRINCESS— KNOCK OFF SABO DE MAR GRAB THE GIRLS, AND BLAST OUR WAY OUT
TOO ROUGH FOR FATHER RAMON..
BUT WE MIGHT SATISFY HIS CONSCIENCE AND SETTLE SABO DE MAR IF WE WORK A KIND OF ...JERICHO CAPER, WILLIE LOVE
1408

MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
FINN TELLS ME THERE'S A STRONGPOINT NEAR THE CAPITAL — AN OLD INCA PALACE OF SOME KIND
WE CAN'T SNATCH THE GIRLS AN' SIT OUT A SIEGE, PRINCESS
IT'S SABO WHO'LL BE UNDER SIEGE — BY YOU, FINN, DUTCHY AND MIG, A FOUR-MAN ARMY
GET FINN OVER HERE AND I'LL LAY IT OUT FOR YOU — YOU'RE GOING TO PLAY JOSHUA AT THE WALLS OF JERICHO, WILLIE
JOSHUA! WELL NOBODY COULD SAY YOU'RE TYPE-CASTING...
1409
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
THE END OF ANOTHER DAY'S MARCH...
BATH-ROOM'S CLEAR!
AHH, LEAD ME TO IT... I'M DISGUSTING
THANKS, FINN
FIVE MINUTES LATER
I'VE ALMOST BEEN ABLE TO HEAR THE WHEELS GOING ROUND IN THAT BEAUTIFUL HEAD — YOU AND WILLIE HAVE COOKED UP A PLOT HAVEN'T YOU?
YES..
SABO LET HIS MEN CROSS THE BORDER AND RAID LOQUERRES — WE'RE GOING TO MAKE HIM THINK THE GOVERNMENT IS HITTING BACK AT LAST WITH SOLDIERS
1410
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
SHORT OF USING FORCE, I CAN'T STOP FATHER RAMON FROM SEEING SABO DE MAR SO I'M GOING WITH HIM... WILLIE AND THE OTHERS WILL BE BUSY ELSEWHERE
AND ME?
I'M NOT TWISTING ANY ARMS, BUT I WANT YOU TO STAY HIDDEN HERE FOR A FEW DAYS — WE'LL LEAVE FOOD AND WATER
THE BLIND MAN GRINS...
SORRY NO SALE! IF YOU LOSE OUT I'LL BE HELPLESS HERE... AND IF YOU WIN I DON'T WANT TO MISS IT, SWEETHEART
1411
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
THE CAPITAL OF CALIA, A RAMBLING SHANTY TOWN...
DON'T MAKE A BIG DEAL OF SPREADING THE RUMOUR THAT AN ARMY'S CROSSED THE BORDER... IT'LL GROW BY ITSELF
JA... BUSH-TELEGRAPH WORK FASTER IN CALIA, WILLIE
RIGHT, NOW SPLIT UP AND START DROPPING THE WORD — IT'LL COME BACK TO US TWICE THE SIZE IN AN HOUR
1412
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
THE RUMOUR SPREADS SWIFTLY THROUGH THE LITTLE TOWN
SOLDIERS MOVING N?
S'TRUE, SOME DAMN FOOLS WENT DOWN-RIVER MADE BIG TROUBLE ACROSS THE BORDER
ARMY'S DROPPED PARATROOP UNITS AND PUSHED SIX COMPANIES THROUGH THE LICHUA PASS!
SABO'LL START CALLING IN MEN TO FIGHT...
HELL FIND A LOT OF FELLERS SUDDENLY GO DEAF — WE GOT FIVE HUNDRED SHEEP TO DIP LOUIS SO LET'S RIDE
1413

MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
THE PRESIDENT'S HOUSE, OUTSIDE THE TOWN
SAY THAT AGAIN, MISTER?
A PRIEST, A WOMAN, A BLIND MAN — THEY WANT TO TALK TO YOU, SABO
WHO ARE THEY?
THE MEN ARE FROM LUQUERRES — THE WOMAN'S EUROPEAN — SHE'S GOT A FUNNY NAME — MODESTY BLAISE
MISTER... THAT NAME MODESTY BLAISE — IT'S NOT FUNNY
1414
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
CHECK FOR WEAPONS — ALL OF THEM, THE PRIEST, THE BLIND MAN AND THE BLAISE WOMAN... ESPECIALLY HER
WE DID — THEY'RE CLEAN
OKAY, MISTER...
... BRING 'EM IN
A GOOD THIRTY HATCHET-MEN IN AND AROUND THE HOUSE — SABO'S PRIVATE ARMY
1415
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
SO YOU'RE BLAISE? BOSSY WOMAN THEY TELL ME
YOU'RE A LONG WAY FROM HOME BOSSY WOMAN — WHAT YOU WANT?
NOTHING... I BROUGHT FATHER RAMON FROM LUQUERRES BECAUSE HE WANTS TO TALK TO YOU
BOSSY PRIEST TOO, HUH? OKAY WHO'S THE GUY WITH NO LAMPS?
JUST A FAILED ARTIST, SENOR — A DISPASSIONATE OBSERVER OF LIFE'S RICH TAPESTRY
1416
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
SENOR... CERTAIN OF YOUR MEN CAME TO LUQUERRES. WHERE THEY ROBBED, AND KILLED — AND TOOK AWAY THREE YOUNG GIRLS...
FOR SOME YEARS CALIA HAS BEEN LOSING ITS EVIL REPUTATION AS THE REPUBLIC OF DESPERADOS.. LET THIS CONTINUE, SENOR, FIND THESE POOR GIRLS AND RETURN THEM TO ME
I MEET YOU HALFWAY, MISTER PRIEST — I ALREADY FOUND THE GIRLS!
BUT I SURE GOING TO KEEP THEM!
1417
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
YOU WANT TO ARGUE, MISTER PRIEST?
YES... I WILL SPARE NO FEAR FOR MYSELF WHILE THREE YOUNG GIRLS FROM MY FLOCK ARE BROUGHT TO DEGRADATION
DON'T PUSH ME, MAN! IT'S SABO DE MAR YOU TALKIN' TO!
YOU WANT THE GIRLS? OKAY. DON'T TELL ME! JUST SAY SOME NICE PRAYERS, HUH?
YOU... MAY BE SURE... I SHALL NOT FAIL IN THAT, MY SON
1418

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

HEY, BOSSY WOMAN YOU DON'T CARE I HIT YOUR MISTER PRIEST?
I'D HAVE COME TALKING WITH A GUN, SABO—BUT THIS IS FATHER RAMON'S BUSINESS AND I HAVE TO LET HIM HANDLE IT HIS WAY
TIME FINN SHOWED UP...
OUTTA ME WAY! I GOT TO SEE SABO DE MAR, URGENT!
1419

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

THE BIG IRISHMAN BURSTS INTO THE PRESIDENT'S OFFICE
SABO, LISTEN—!
NO, YOU LISTEN, MISTER!
YOU'RE FINN, YEH? WELL, YOU CALL ME MISTER PRESIDENT, SEE?
HOLY ST PATRICK! YOU'LL NOT BE PRESIDENT LONG IF YOU DON'T LISTEN!
THERE'S SOLDIERS MOVIN' IN! KILLED FOUR FELLERS NEAR THE MINE I WAS WORKIN' WITH ME MATES— I RODE LIKE HELL THREE HOURS TO WARN YOU!
1420

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

SOLDIERS MOVING IN?
DIDN'T I TELL YA? GIMME A DRINK FOR PETE'S SAKE!
So... you were right to say it would be useless trying to talk to Sebo de Mar
You and Torres both knew that from the start
True—but I am allowed no options... and Torres is neutral, of course
No—not any longer, by God
1421

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

YOU TALKIN' SCARE-TALK, FINN! WE CAN RAISE SIX, SEVEN THOUSAND MEN TO TAKE CARE OF ANY SOLDIERS!
YA CAN'T EVEN RAISE A HUNDRED, MR. PRESIDENT...
I CAME THROUGH TOWN, AND IT'S DAMN NEAR EMPTY! THE YELLER RATS IS SCUTTLIN' OFF TO THEIR FARMS AN' THEIR HERDS AN' THEIR MINES
ARR, IT'S NOT LIKE THE OLD DAYS IN CALIA... THEY'LL FIGHT FOR THEIR OWN PATCH OF GROUND, THAT'S ALL... THEY'VE GONE SOFT! AN' TO HELL WITH 'EM!
NICE GOING, FINN...
1422

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

PUT THEM THREE WITH THE GIRLS FROM LUGUERRES! I'LL BE DOWN TOWN —YOU COME, FINN!
SABO DE MAR RIDES INTO THE CAPITAL OF CALIA WITH SOME OF HIS BODYGUARD
THERE Y'ARE, MR. PRESIDENT! EVERYONE WAS TALKIN' ABOUT THE GOLDERS COMING— AN' NOW IT'S A GHOST TOWN, LIKE I TOLD YA!
HEY, YOU! WHERE YOU MEN GO?
423

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

THERE'S SOLDIERS COMING — THEY GOT NO QUARREL WITH US, JUST WITH YOU, SABO
SO EVERYBODY GET OUT
ALL GO YELLER ON ME, HA? WHEN THIS THING FINISH I MAKE PLENTY CHANGE HERE — KILL FEW MEN FOR LESSON!...
THESE TWO NOW!
NOT NICE FELLER, DAT SABO
NOT NICE AT ALL, DUTCHY... I WONDER 'OW THE PRINCESS MADE OUT
1424

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

IN THE PRESIDENT'S HOUSE, FATHER RAMON COMFORTS THE THREE KIDNAPPED GIRLS
FINN PUT ON A CONVINCING ACT FOR SABO DE MAR...
...LET'S HOPE WILLIE AND HIS FRIENDS DID AS WELL WITH THE RUMOURS ABOUT THE SOLDIERS MOVING IN
WE'LL SOON KNOW
FINN MOVES ON TO THE NEXT STAGE OF MODESTY'S PLAN
SIX COMPANIES, I HEARD — AN' WE CAN ONLY RAISE MAYBE THIRTY MEN! NOW, WOULD YOU BY ANY CHANCE BE INTERESTED IN A PROMISIN IDEA, MR PRESIDENT?
1425

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

THE GOV'MENT CAN NEVER AFFORD A LONG FIGHT! IF WE HOLD OUT FOR TEN DAYS THEM SOLDIERS'LL PACK UP AN' GO HOME!
YOU CRAZY? 'S EIGHT GODDAM DAYS TOO LONG
NOT WITH HOSTAGES! YOU GOT A PRIEST, A BLIND MAN, AND FOUR WOMEN! SO WE JUST HOLE UP WITH 'EM IN THE OLD AZTEC FORT, AN' LET THE SOLDIERS KNOW...
THAT'LL STOP 'EM USING HEAVY STUFF OR BRINGIN' IN A BOMBER! AN' IF THEY ATTACK WITH SMALL ARMS JUST, WE'LL KNOCK THE HELL OUTA THEM!
426

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

OUTSIDE! FAST!
GET THAT AMMUNITION ON THE WAGONS!
WE'RE MOVING TO AN OLD FORT — AN' GOD HELP THE LOT O' YOU IF ANYONE TRIES RUNNIN' AWAY!
D'YA HEAR?
HE'S goin' fine, Mam'selle, just fine
And he's a great actor you'd make, Finn boyo
1427

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

ON A WOODED HILL STANDS WHAT WAS ONCE AN AZTEC FORT. THE ROOF TIMBERS HAVE CRUMBLED BUT THE MASSIVE WALLS STILL STAND, BARELY TOUCHED BY TIME
WELL, YOU TALKED AND FAILED, PADRE. I SAID YOU'D NEED A MIRACLE TO SAVE THOSE GIRLS
PERHAPS YOU WERE WRONG TORRES...
...MODESTY HAS REDUCED THE OPPOSITION FROM SEVERAL THOUSAND TO THIS SMALL HANDFUL — NO MIRACLE, OF COURSE, BUT VERY ENCOURAGING!
1428

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

IN THE COURTYARD OF THE FORT...

FINN! GET MEN FIXIN' A BARRICADE AT THE GATE!

THEN GET THEM PRISONERS LOCKED UP AND START ORGAN SIN' DEFENCE! YOU MY SECOND IN COMMAND, MAN!

SIRR!

WILLIE, DUTCHY AND MIG WATCH FROM HIDING

RIGHT... NOW WE SPREAD OUT AND LET 'EM HEAR A FEW LITTLE BATTLES GOING ON

1429

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

AS DUSK FALLS, WILLIE AND HIS FRIENDS START WORK AT DIFFERENT POINTS OF THE COMPASS

THAT SHOOTING STILL A WAY OFF— SOLDIERS ROUND NG UP ANY CALIA MEN THEY FIND

AN SERVE THE SCUTTLIN' DIVILS RIGHT, MR PRESIDENT!

I'LL JUST CHECK THE PRISONERS, THEN GO ROUND AN' GIVE THE BOYS A PEP-TALK

1430

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

...AN' 'LL KICK THE LIVIN' DAYLIGHTS OUTA ANYONE WHO MAKES TROUBLE— MAN OR WOMAN!

THAT FINN, HE TELL THEM!

D'YA HEAR ME, BLAISE?

Here's your gear, mam'selle— gun, kongo, an' the rest

Good... now I'll have a bruise on me for effect, Finn

AN THERE'S A TASTER N CASE YA TH NK I'M JUST TALK NG!

Holy St. Patrick! I'd sooner have me arm broke but she MADE me

1431

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

N HEAVEN'S NAME, CHILD, WHY MAKE FINN HIT YOU LIKE THAT?

FOR YOUR SAKE, PADRE

MINE?

I'M AFRA D SO... SHE'S TRYING TO WIN WITH M NIMUM BLOODSHED AND THE LONGER FINN'S COVER HOLDS THE LESS BLOODSHED THERE'LL BE

TH S WAS TO STRENGTHEN HIS COVER— R GHT?

YOU SEE TOO MUCH FOR A BLIND MAN, TORRES— AND TALK TOO MUCH

1432

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

AH— HERE COMES WILLIE! WE DO GOOD JOB MAKING SABO THINK THERE ARE PLENTY SOLDIERS IN CAL A, JA?

IT'D BETTER BE JA, DUTCHY

TONIGHT I THINK FINN AND MAM'SELLE GO ROUND AND KILL MANY PEOPLE N FORT— THEN WE GO IN AND SHOOT THE REST!

THAT'D BE THE EASY WAY, M G..

BUT SHE'S NOT PLAYING — THE EASY WAY— SO WE DON'T SHOOT ANYONE YET

433

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

WHAT HAPPENS NOW, MODESTY?
FINN SHOULD BE GIVING THE OFF-DUTY SHIFT A PEP-TALK—TO DISCOURAGE THEM
ARR, IT'LL BE A GRAND FIGHT, BOYOS! AND WE'LL WIN! THERE'S MAYBE A LOT OF US'LL NEVER COME THROUGH ALIVE — BUT REMEMBER YOU'RE BLEEDIN' AN' DYIN' FOR SABO DE MAR!
GO FIGHT LIKE TIGERS! FIGHT WHEN YA STUMMICK'S RIDDLED! FIGHT WHEN THERE'S BULLETS SMASHING YA BONES! FIGHT TILL THERE'S NEVER A DROP O' BLOOD LEFT IN YA!
1434

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

FINN ENDS HIS PEP-TALK

...SO FIGHT TO THE LAST, LADS—AN' IF YOU'RE SHOT TO PIECES YOU CAN DIE HAPPY! HAPPY THAT YA NEVER SNEAKED OUT ON SABO DE MAR WHILE YA HAD THE CHANCE!
FOUR HOURS LATER...
AN' THAT MAKES TEN SO FAR... ARR, YA SHOULDA BEEN A POLITICIAN, FINN BOYO!
1435

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

SEE YOUR 'EAD MIG
IF THE FIGHT START IN DAYLIGHT WILLIE HOW WE GET IN TO HELP? IS MUCH OPEN GROUND TO COVER!
WE DON'T LOOK LIKE SOLDIERS, DO WE? WE LOOK LIKE REINFORCEMENTS FOR SABO—SO WE JUST RIDE UP TO THE GATE
IN THE FORT
I CAN HEAR THEM THOUGH, SWEETHEART
F FINN'S PEP-TALK HIT THE RIGHT NOTE SOME OF THE BOYS WILL BE GETTING OUT... TOO DARK TO SEE ANYTHING FROM HERE
1436

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

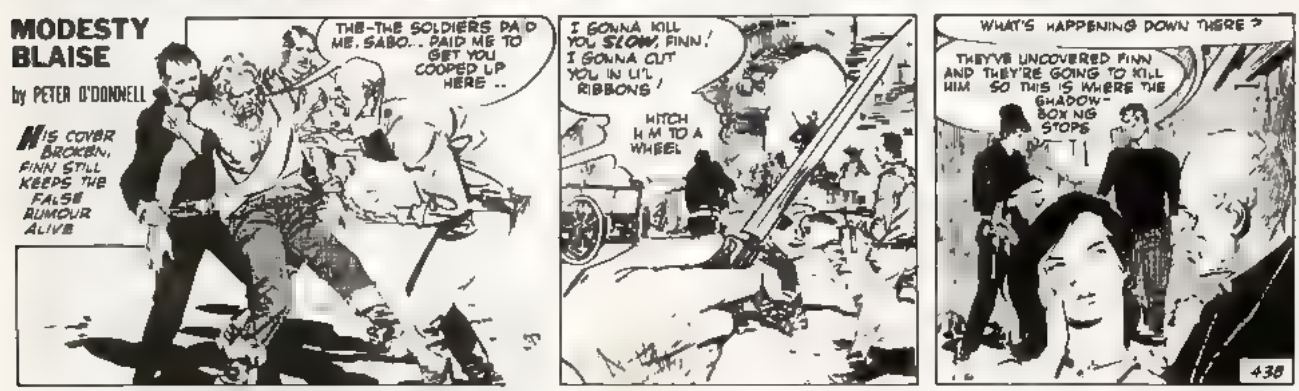
DAWN, IN THE AZTEC FORT

FINN! WAKE UP! THERE'S HALF THE MEN RAN OUT LAST NIGHT! HALF!
NEVER. WHY THE DIRTY YELLER-BELLIES!
BUT—BUT WE STILL GOT THE HOSTAGES, MR PRESIDENT, AN' THAT'S WHAT COUNTS!
WHAT COUNTS IS THAT YOU'RE A DOUBLE-CROSSER, FINN! I JUST HEARD ABOUT YOUR PEP-TALK LAST NIGHT—YOU SCARED ALL BUT TWO OF THOSE BOYS INTO PULLING OUT!
1437

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

HIS COVER BROKEN, FINN STILL KEEPS THE FALSE RUMOUR ALIVE


THE—THE SOLDIERS PAID ME, SABO... PAID ME TO GET YOU COOPED UP HERE...
I GONNA KILL YOU SLOW, FINN! I GONNA CUT YOU IN LI'L RIBBONS!
HITCH HIM TO A WHEEL
WHAT'S HAPPENING DOWN THERE?
THEY'VE UNCOVERED FINN AND THEY'RE GOING TO KILL HIM SO THIS IS WHERE THE SHADOW-BOXING STOPS
438

MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
ONCE I'M OUT, TRY TO JAM THIS DOOR PADRE — I COULD PROBABLY GET YOU A GUN, BUT YOU WON'T USE IT
SET ONE — I'LL USE IT! ROSA CAN GIVE ME AN AIM ON THE DOOR
RIGHT, FIVE SECOND FUSE, EVERYONE GET IN THE CORNER AND HUDDLE DOWN
IN THE COURTYARD, FINN IS LASHED TO A WHEEL — AND THE GUARDS OUTSIDE THE PRISONERS' CHAMBER LOOK DOWN ON THE SCENE
1439
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
FROM BEHIND THE TWO GUARDS COMES A SUDDEN SHARP EXPLOSION AS THE DOOR IS BLASTED OPEN
WHAT'S THAT? WHO SHOOTING UP THERE?
SHE'S OUT...!
1440
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
HERE TORRES — NOW GET THAT DOOR JAMMED AND SET TIGHT
MODESTY SHOVES HERSELF MOVING FAST
IT'S BLAISE — SHE'S OUT! GET HER!
AND ON THE EDGE OF THE TREES...
SHOOTING INSIDE FORT, WILLIE!
I HEARD — LET'S GO
1441
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
MODESTY SWITCHES TO SEMI-AUTOMATIC, AND FIRES THRIFTILY
ONLY HALF A MAGAZINE TO PLAY WITH
GET AROUND BEHIND HER!
AND FINN'S IN A BAD SPOT — GOT TO KEEP THEM TOO BUSY TO WORRY ABOUT HIM TILL WILLIE GETS HERE
GIVE 'EM A SHOUT, DUTCHY
OPEN UP! THERE'S SOLDIERS A COUPLE MILE BEHIND US!
1442
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
ALL SABO DE MAR'S EFFORTS ARE FOCUSSED ON HUNTING DOWN MODESTY AND FINN, FORGOTTEN
MAKE THE MOST OF IT WHILE SHE'S GOT 'EM ON THE HOP FINN BOYO!
AS THE WAGON CRASHES DOWN WHERE DUTCHY AND HIS REGU THE BARRICADE
SOLDIERS COME! WHERE SABO?
HE GOT TROUBLE RIGHT HERE!
1443

MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
WILLIE AND FINN'S MEN — THEY'RE THROUGH THE BARRICADE
NOW!
HEY-!
HIS WRISTS STILL LASHED TO THE WHEEL, FINN SWINGS IT LIKE A FLAIL
D'YA HAVE A KNIFE HANDY, WILLIE?
1444
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
YOU KNOW SOMETHING, FINN? THE AZTECS NEVER GOT ROUND TO INVENTING THE WHEEL
WELL THERE'S AN AMAZIN' THING NOW! WHO TOLD YOU?
I READ IT IN A BOOK—WHERE'S EVERYONE GOT TO?
THEY'RE CHASIN' THROUGH THE FORT LIKE FERRETS IN A WARREN...
...HOPIN' TO NAIL MAM'SELLE
1445
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
DUTCHY, MIG — STAY 'ERE AND KEEP 'EM BOTTLED UP
WE'LL START WHITTLING 'EM DOWN, FINN
MODESTY CONTINUES THE HIDE-AND-SEEK FIGHT THROUGH THE OLD AZTEC FORT
BETTER GET BACK AND STAND GUARD OVER FATHER RAMON AND THE GIRLS... WILLIE AND HIS FRIENDS CAN MOP UP THE REST OF SABO'S MEN
IN THE SMALL CHAMBER
I'M GOING OUT, PADRE — I CAN'T WAIT HERE LISTENING TO IT ALL ANY LONGER
TORRES, NO!
1446
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
RIGHT — NOW WHAT'S THE WAY OF IT, WILLIE?
WE SPLIT UP AN' PLAY IT SNEAKY ... DON'T WANT TO UPSET FATHER RAMON TOO MUCH, SEE?
AH...!
THE PRINCESS SAID TO KNOCK 'EM ON THE 'EAD IF YOU CAN, AND ONLY SHOOT 'EM IF YOU CAN'T—
— BUT DON'T GET SLOWED DOWN MAKING UP YOUR MIND
I HAVE IT CLEAR, WILLIE BOY
1447
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
IN THE SMALL CHAMBER...
IT WAS WRONG OF TORRES TO GO OUT... BUT NOW WE MUST TRY TO WEDGE THE DOOR —
STAY REAL QUIET!
I GOT A SMART IDEA... I THINK THE BLAISE GIRL COME BACK HERE SOON!
A HAND PUSHES THE DOOR OPEN, AND —
ONLY TWO MINUTES LATER...
OH MY GOD, THE DOOR'S OPEN...
1448

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

MODESTY'S BULLET KNOCKS THE SUBMACHINE GUN FROM THE MAN'S HANDS— AND HE LUNGES FORWARD WITH A KICK TO THE HEAD
SHOOT, MODESTY!
THE STANDING LEG IS SCYTHED AWAY, AND—
COVER THE DOOR, ROSA — LET ME KNOW IF ANYONE'S COMING
1450

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

YOU SHOULD HAVE SHOT HIM!
YES... BUT I'D JUST FIRED MY LAST BULLET, ROSA
AND I BROKE THE ACTION OF HIS GUN WITH IT... THAT'S A PITY
WHERE'S TORRES?
HE... WENT OUT
WENT OUT? WHAT THE HELL DOES HE HOPE TO DO— SHOOT THEM BY SOUND?
TAKE THIS, ROSA— IT'S NO GOOD, BUT IF ANYONE COMES, STICK IT IN HIS FACE AND BLUFF
1451

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

TORRES GROPES HIS WAY ALONG THE RAMPART, AND HEARS SCATTERED SHOOTING FROM WITHIN THE FORT
TRY TO DRAW OFF SOME OF SABO'S MEN... MIGHT HELP MODESTY AND WILLIE...
SABO! SOLDIERS CLIMBING THE WALL HERE!
THAT'S TORRES YELLING IN A PHONEY VOICE— THE HARE-BRAINED FOOL!
1452

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

TORRES SHOUTS AGAIN TO CONFUSE SABO'S MEN, AND FIRES A SHORT BURST IN THE AIR
SOLDIERS HERE! HELP!
THE BLIND MAN PLAY A TRICK!
BULLETS STITCH A SEAM ACROSS THE ANCIENT WALL — AND TORRES TURNS, FIRING BACK
GOT HIM! CRAZY BLIND MAN!
1453

MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
SABO DE MAR STARES DOWN IN UNBELIEF AT HIS DEAD SECOND-IN-COMMAND
HE-HE KILL YOU! THAT GODDAM BLIND MAN KILL YOU!
AHH...! YOU STILL LITTLE BIT ALIVE, BLIND MAN? YOU GOT LITTLE BIT LEFT FOR ME TO FINISH?
SABO!
1454
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
NO GUN? YOU MAKE BIG MISTAKE, BLAISE... YOU MAKE YOUR LAST MISTAKE!
FIGHTER'S SHUFFLE... PRO STYLE GRIP... GOOD BALANCE— HE'S WON A LOT OF KNIFE-FIGHTS
IN THE SMALL CHAMBER...
'ALLO, PADRE, IT'S JUST ABOUT OVER
EXCEPT WE HAVE TO FIND SABO, JUST
DO IT QUICKLY, BEFORE HE FINDS TORRES AND MODESTY! SHE IS UNARMED...
1455
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
TWO SKILLED COMBATANTS CIRCLE AND MANOEUVRE IN A SWIFT ARABESQUE, EACH SEEKING A CHINK IN THE OTHER'S DEFENCE
CAN'T MAKE A STRIKE, HE'S TOO GOOD... HAVE TO GIVE HIM AN OPENING
AS SABO DE MAR MOVES IN, MODESTY SLITHERS BACK QUICKLY— AND SEEMS TO CATCH HER HEEL ON THE ROUGH GROUND
1456
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
SABO DE MAR LUNGES DOWN ... AND HIS KNIFE-HAND IS TRAPPED
UUH!
AN' WHERE THE DIVIL IS SABO?
I THINK THAT'S 'IM GOING BY NOW...
1457
MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
ALL CLEANED UP AN ONLY SIX FOR BURYIN', PADRE! SAINT PATRICK HIMSELF COULDN'T COMPLAIN ABOUT THAT NOW!
ON THE RAMPART...
'E MUST'VE BEEN CRAZY, GOING INTO A GUN-BATTLE BLIND...
YES... AND HE WAS THE ONE WHO ALWAYS SAID THAT NOTHING WAS WORTH FIGHTING FOR
I... CHANGED MY MIND...
TORRES!
1458

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

BULLET JUST CREASED 'IS SKULL!
AND A DAMN SIGHT LESS THAN HE DESERVES! YOU —YOU STUPID PEASANT, TORRES! I TOLD YOU TO STAY WITH THE PADRE! I TOLD YOU—
YOU'RE ANGRY... AND YOU'VE GOT A VERY DIRTY FACE... AND A SPLIT LIP... AND A BIG BRUISE HERE... AND YOU'RE STILL BEAUTIFUL
MY GOD, HE CAN SEE!
1459

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

THE END OF THE DAY...
SO A GLANCING BULLET HAS GIVEN YOU BACK YOUR SIGHT, AND YOU WILL BE ABLE TO PAINT AGAIN, TORRES. YOU HAVE ALL THE WORLD TO LOOK AT ANEW...
...YET I NOTICED YOU DO NOT TAKE YOUR EYES FROM MODESTY
THE REST OF THE WORLD WON'T GO AWAY, PADRE. BUT I'LL HAVE TO PAINT MODESTY FROM MEMORY...
A WEEK LATER. IN THE TOWN OF CALIA
GOODBYE, FINN — I'M GLAD THEY ELECTED YOU PRESIDENT
IT'S AN IMPOSITION, MAM'SELLE! I'LL HAVE TO BEHAVE MESELF WITH OUTRAGEOUS DECORUM, SO I WILL!
1460

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

WITH DUTCHY AND MIG AS ESCORT, MODESTY'S PARTY STARTS THE JOURNEY HOME
I'VE BEEN THINKING... IF YOU'RE GOING AWAY, I DON'T WANT TO STAY ON IN LUQUERRES — SO I'LL SAY GOODBYE NOW, MODESTY
NOW?
I LIKE IT HERE — SEND SOME PAINTS AND CANVAS TO THE TRADING POST FOR ME, SWEETHEART
MAYBE I'LL GET FINN TO MAKE ME HIS MINISTER OF CULTURE!
1461